

UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL
26 July 1985

THE POLICE'S STEWART COPELAND MAKES OWN FILM; SAYS BAND WILL REUNITE
BY FRANK SPOTNITZ
NEW YORK

Stewart Copeland, the sole American in the platinum-selling rock group the Police, isn't interested in screaming fans, magazine covers, popping flashbulbs, or making millions. In fact, he's puzzled by it all.

"Lawyers, doctors and interior decorators, you can understand why society rewards them for what they do. But somebody who bangs things in rhythm, it's a little bit harder to work out," the lanky blonde said.

Copeland's musings on his happy predicament, rising from the son of a CIA agent stationed in Beirut to become a wealthy drummer in one of the world's most popular rock bands, led him to the subject of "rhythmism," which is not surprisingly the study of rhythm.

"Rhythm and music are very important in subtle ways," he said.

His fascination with how rhythms coincide, not just in music but in the pumping of an engine piston or the pulse of an electrical current, is the focus of Copeland's latest project, a film called "The Rhythmist" in which he stars.

Shot in Africa, often with tribes never before exposed to Western culture, the home video is intended to be a "video LP," with a plot so loose and music and pictures so interesting that it can be played over and over like a record.

Copeland, 33, is not the first member of the Police to have dabbled in film. Each member of the band has become a multimedia artist between albums.

Striking lead singer Sting has been in several movies, including "Dune" and the upcoming "The Bride," and recently released an excellent solo album, "The Dream of the Blue Turtles," collaborating with several top jazz musicians.

Police guitarist Andy Summers, meanwhile, has kept busy with a book of photography and two albums with guitarist Robert Fripp.

In addition to "The Rhythmist," Copeland penned the score for Francis Coppola's "Rumblefish" and, more recently, wrote music for a 60-piece

orchestra and composed songs for two Lucasfilm cartoon series based on "Star Wars" characters the Ewoks and the droids.

A soundtrack for "The Rhythmist" is soon to be released, along with a music video and a single. The heavily percussive music for the film is, to say the least, unusual.

"It's in a foreign language for a start," Copeland said. "And there's no recognizable connection with the mainstream of modern music, which was the whole point. I wasn't out to do the mainstream, modern music in Africa. I was out there to do new stuff."

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